



## From the Secretary of State

Dan Gwadosky

Maine is a great state and wildlife paradise. It's that wildlife that brings people here and enhances our quality of life. But that wildlife paradise comes with a hidden hazard, the possibility of being involved in a devastating car-moose collision.

We encourage folks to enjoy our state. We have some of the most scenic drives in the country, but remember we share our roads with wildlife. Stay alert, keep your eyes on the road and enjoy the great State of Maine.



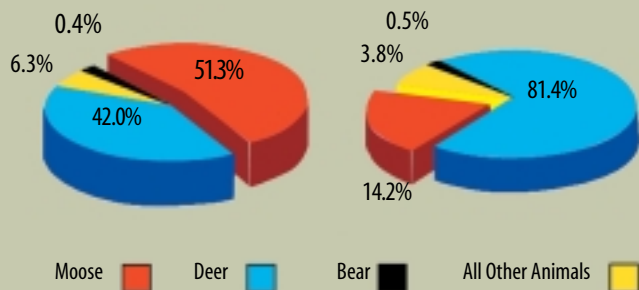
### Statistics

Between 1996 and 1998 there were nearly 15,000 reported vehicle-large animal collisions in Maine (over 12,100 were with deer and over 2,100 involved moose). Eight people died in those crashes.

### Maine Crashes Involving Animals (1996-98) \*

Estimated economic impact  
\$97,790,000

14,936 Animal Crashes

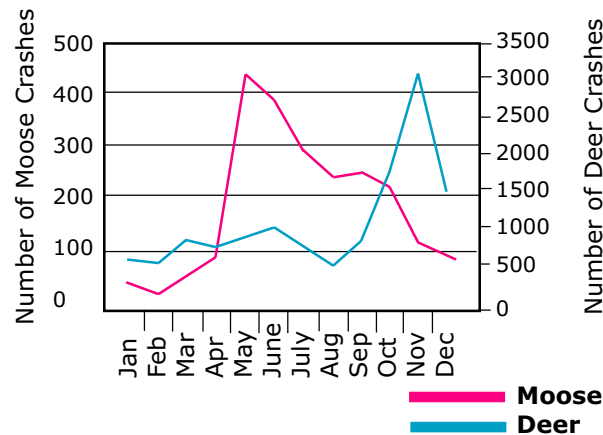


\* Based on collisions reported to the Maine Department of Transportation

Collisions between large wildlife and vehicles occur suddenly. While a collision is possible at any time, there are times and places where collisions are more likely to occur:

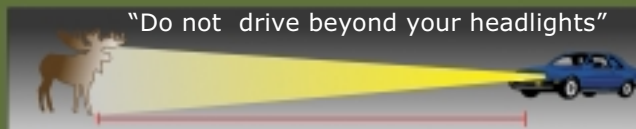
- Deer and moose are most active near dawn and dusk. Be especially alert from sunset to sunrise, since darkness reduces recognition and driver reaction times.
- Collisions with **deer** increase in the fall, peaking in November during breeding season.
- Crashes involving moose are highest in the summer months.

### Maine Moose and Deer Crashes by Month (1998-2000)

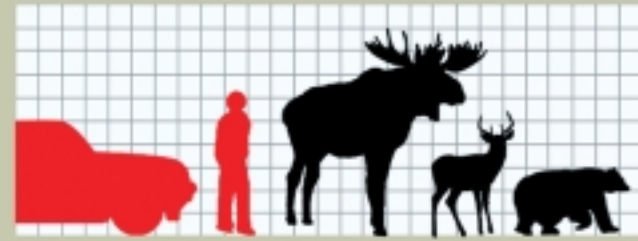


### Driver Tips:

- Inattention and speed play a role in vehicle-wildlife collisions.
- In reduced visibility due to darkness, rain, or fog, travel speed should be adjusted to the conditions. Slowing down when visibility is reduced greatly increases safety.
- Be alert in rural and forested areas.
- Watch for the reflective eyes of deer or the silhouette of a moose. Use high beams when possible. (Moose are extremely difficult to see at night due to their dark color and because their eyes don't reflect light.)
- If one animal crosses the road, assume that there are more animals around.
- Wildlife warning signs are important indicators of areas with high concentrations of wildlife.



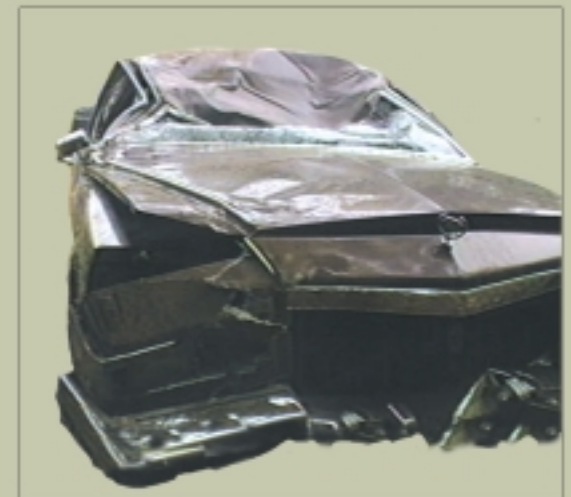
- If you encounter a moose standing in the road:
- Do not try to go around it.
  - Stay in your vehicle. Do not get out to observe or to chase it off the road. By getting out of the car, you put yourself and other drivers at risk. Moose can be unpredictable and may charge or attack your vehicle.
  - Give the moose plenty of room and let it wander back to the woods



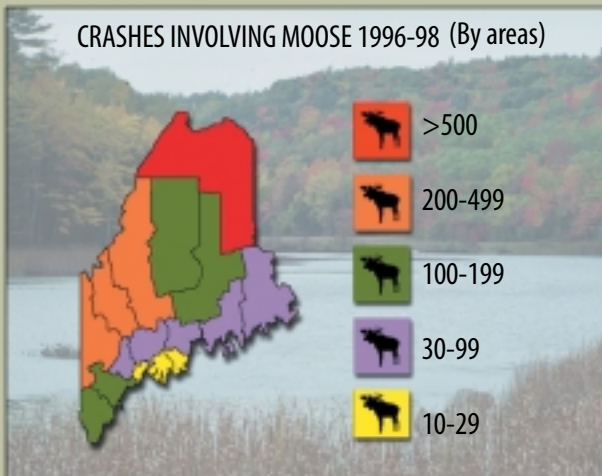
Relative size of animals compared to 6 ft. human and mid-size auto.

If a crash with an animal is imminent, apply the brakes and steer straight. Let up on the brakes just prior to the impact to allow the front of your vehicle to rise slightly, reducing the risk of the animal striking the windshield area.

Be aware that wildlife collisions can occur at any time and under almost any circumstances anywhere in Maine. Pay attention, stay alert and always remember...it can happen to you.



CRASHES INVOLVING MOOSE 1996-98 (By areas)



## What Can You Do?

The key element to safe driving is to stay alert.

An easy to use system called the **SIPDE** process can help keep you safe. **SIPDE** is an acronym for: **S**earch, **I**dentify, **P**redict, **D**ecide, **E**xecute.

- 1) **Search** the roadway and off-road areas 20-30 seconds ahead, or as far as you can see, for information to help you plan a path of travel.
- 2) **Identify** objects 10-12 seconds ahead that could interfere with your planned path of travel, such as deer or moose in the roadway or on the roadside.
- 3) **Predict** actions or changes in conditions on or near the roadway that could increase the level of risk. Animals may move into the roadway suddenly and unexpectedly.
- 4) **Decide** how best to minimize the risk of a collision. Do this in relation to what you have seen already, slowing down or increasing your speed as necessary. Make safe changes to your travel path. Make this decision quickly in response to information gathered, usually in no more than 4-5 seconds.
- 5) **Execute** your decision.

### Participating agencies:

- Maine Department of Transportation
- Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife
- Maine Secretary of State - Division of Motor Vehicles
- Maine Department of Public Safety - Division of Highway Safety
- Maine Turnpike Authority

### For more information contact:

Bureau of Planning  
Maine Department of Transportation  
Tel 207-624-3300  
Fax 207-624-3301  
TTY 207-287-3392

or look for the moose at:

[www.state.me.us/mdot/mainhtml/publication.htm](http://www.state.me.us/mdot/mainhtml/publication.htm)

# HIDDEN HAZARDS



*The dangers of wildlife-motor vehicle collisions*

# HIDDEN HAZARDS

MAINE CRASH TRENDS 1990-1999

